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Floor Statement

Rep. Anh “Joseph” Cao

H Res 249 Commemorate the 45th anniversary of Bloody Sunday

“Selma: Opening the Door to the Opportunity”

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Mister Speaker -

Today I rise in support of H.Con.Res. 249 to commemorate the 45th anniversary of Bloody Sunday and the role that it played in ensuring the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Today, we remember a momentous occasion in our history. On March 7, 1965, six hundred marchers, led by my esteemed colleague from Georgia, Congressman John Lewis, were savagely attacked by state and local police as they attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge into Selma, Alabama.

These brave marchers used the power of nonviolence to demand that most basic of democratic rights of a citizen: the right to vote. In return, the marchers were met with billy-clubs and tear gas. But the marchers confronted terror with courage. While they may have been bludgeoned, they could not be beaten.

Their dignity in the face of brutality moved this House to pass the Voting Rights Act, which reaffirmed this nation’s commitment that every citizen has the right to participate fully in the political life of the nation.

This past weekend, my family and I traveled to Selma to honor the 45th anniversary of Bloody Sunday.

Kate, my wife, our two daughters, Betsy and Sophia, and I, we marched from Brown Chapel to the top of Edmund Pettus Bridge, and along the way, not only did we learn of the significance of the march, but also the love and adoration that the people still have for the historical marchers, among those was John Lewis.

I commented then and firmly believe today that I owe so much of my personal and political success to the struggles of the African American community.

Because of their perseverance and sacrifice, doors have been permanently opened to every minority community in America.

Mister Speaker, it was an honor to have been a part of this momentous commemoration, to work with dedicated public servants like my good friend from Georgia, and I'd ask my colleagues' to support this open resolution.